

## BACK TO BUSINESS IOWA PODCAST

A partnership of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and America's SBDC Iowa

### SEASON 1 | EPISODE 43: How Iowa Non-Profits have Adapted in the Age of COVID-19

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**Description:** *Special guests Angie Dethlefs-Trettin, Chief Community Impact Officer of the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, and Paul Thelen, Director of the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Non-Profit Resource Center, speak with host Steve Adams about the many challenges facing Iowa's non-profit organizations during the pandemic, and the ways in which they are adapting and innovating to increase their impact during this challenging time.*

[music]

#### **Steve Adams, host** 00:10

Hello, and welcome to the Back to Business Iowa podcast from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. This podcast is a collaboration between Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the programs including Community and Economic Development, Farm, Food and Enterprise Development, and the Iowa Small Business Development Centers. These podcasts cover relevant topics for businesses and individuals related to education, research and technical assistance during and post COVID-19.

#### **Steve Adams, host** 00:54

I'm Steve Adams, field specialist three at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, part of the Community and Economic Development unit and your host for these podcasts. Today our guests are Angie Dethlefs-Trettin, Chief Community Impact officer of the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, and Paul Thelen, director of the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center housed at the University of Iowa. We will be discussing today how nonprofits across Iowa are faring during this pandemic and what resources are available to them for both help and support. Angie, Paul, thanks for being with us today.

#### **Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 01:38

Thanks for having us. Really excited to be here. Steve.

#### **Paul Thelen** 01:40

Happy to join you both.

#### **Steve Adams, host** 01:42

Thank you. Well, Angie, let's kind of kick things off with you. Can you tell us a little bit about the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines and why it was formed and what its mission is?

#### **Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 01:54

Well, Steve, again, just really pleased to be here today, always appreciate an opportunity, as I know Paul does as well, to really talk about the critical role of nonprofits in our communities, and specifically the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. So our organization's mission is to improve quality of life for all by promoting charitable giving, by connecting donors to causes they care about, and by providing leadership on important community issues. We ultimately believe that we are better together.



**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 02:28**

So in terms of when our organization was formed, we actually just celebrated our 50th birthday last year. And really the entire movement of community foundations across the country started a little over 100 years ago. And just like many of those other community foundations from coast to coast and border to border, we were really formed because our community believes in the power of local philanthropy, of local giving, and we believe in the future of communities. And so I think that's really at the core, why community foundations have evolved across the country.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 03:08**

You know, those elements of our mission, like I referenced, Steve, really are about talking about why charitable giving is so important, helping people find what they're passionate about in their local communities, and stepping in and helping to convene conversations that are critically important in our regions, whether it's conversations around what our community might look like in the future to critical issues that we need to address, but we need to address them together.

**Steve Adams, host 03:36**

Well, 50 years, so 1969, if my math is correct, is that right?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 03:41**

Yeah, I think so. You know, I wasn't a math major there, Steve. But I think that's a pretty good one. [laughter]

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 03:46**

All right. And I gotta ask real quick, Angie, your title is chief community impact officer — what exactly is that? What's your role then with the foundation?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 03:56**

Yeah, that's a great question, Steve. And I like to describe it as, it's really a great privilege and honor, to be quite frank, to be able to help put the resources of the foundation out into the community. So I have the opportunity to help facilitate our grant-making programs, and help really convene and play a role in community leadership exercises. I like a good analogy, and so maybe a good way to think of my job in this particular role is as a community pollinator. I have an opportunity to talk to donors and I have an opportunity to talk to really hard-working nonprofit leaders, and also great colleagues in the sector like Paul, and help to pollinate ideas and create opportunities for people to have creative collisions, and really effective solutions for community.

**Steve Adams, host 04:47**

Creative collisions. I love that, I may use that in the future. Hey, Angie, so for people that don't know, how are community foundations funded, and where is the major source of revenue for foundations?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 05:01**

Yeah, so community foundations are a public charity, so similar to organizations that might be near and dear to your heart, whether it's a food bank organization, maybe your place of religious practice, might even be the local theatre. All those are nonprofit organizations, as is the community foundation. Now the thing to think about with a community foundation is, instead of serving the hungry or producing wonderful local theater or whatever that particular mission might be of an organization, the community foundations mission is really about creating charitable dollars to support a community, both today and tomorrow. So that's what our mission is all about.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 05:45**

And community foundations, including ours here in Des Moines, work with individuals who give to the foundation, families who give to the foundation, businesses and corporations who give to the foundation. We even have relationships with nonprofits that give to the community foundation. And we hold a collection of funds, charitable funds, that are all about making a difference in our community in a variety of issue areas—arts and culture, health, economic development, you name it, if it's charitable, a community foundation is able to help donors facilitate good work in the community.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 06:25**

So in terms of sources of revenue, you know, its charitable contributions. And then we also have an opportunity, then, the fees that are on the funds we hold, help not only a community foundation administer those funds, invest those funds, support the day-to-day work of those funds, but also it helps us do all of the community leadership work, like convening, strategic grant-making, facilitating dialogues and nonprofit trainings, of which we've again, a great partnership opportunity of which Paul has been a great partner for us in that work as well. So that might give you just a little bit of overview about the community foundation.

**Steve Adams, host 07:06**

Well, I know here in Montgomery County, for example, we're part of the Omaha Community Foundation, and they have a number of affiliates. How many affiliates are there under your purview? And do you also work in partnership with any other community foundations around the state?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 07:23**

Yes, we do. I tell you, this better together mantra that we have certainly permeates all of the work of the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. So to your question, Steve, we have 39 county and community affiliates that work with our office. And we are very closely connected to really other community foundations across the state through a colleague network locally called the Iowa Council of Foundations. So collectively in Iowa, in addition to our 39 county and community foundations, there are affiliate community foundations across the state, about 130, I think, or so at last count. And I think again, this network is so important to learn from each other and to help talk about why community-based philanthropy is so important, both to what's happening now in communities, but to the future of communities across Iowa.

**Steve Adams, host 08:18**

With those 39 affiliates, I noticed from your website that you even have some folks from the Clarinda Foundation down here in my backyard—how did you end up with those people?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 08:28**

Well, you know, it depends, community to community. But yes, we have relationships in Clarinda. And a lot of times, again, it's about helping make donor connections where it makes sense for donors. We have many donors with the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines that live in our region, but we also have donors who love regions in Iowa, and so it really varies. But at the end of the day, both our foundation, our affiliates, and also our colleague community foundations across Iowa really stand ready to help people give back and make Iowa the great place to live. Again, today and tomorrow is sort of the theme.

**Steve Adams, host 09:06**

I also noticed at on your website that you started something called the Disaster Recovery Fund. Could you tell our listeners a little bit about this fund and what its purpose is?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 09:18**

Absolutely. You know, 2020 has been such a year. And I know, as Paul will talk about later, you know, the impact that it's had on nonprofits, you know, has been significant. And the impact that it's had on communities has been, you know, significant as well. But the reason why the Disaster Recovery Fund was started actually stemmed from a different time. And in 2018, there were several community organizations in greater Des Moines that came together to address some really flash flooding that we had. You know, we had 10-plus inches of rain in just a matter of what felt like seconds, and really devastated parts of our community.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 10:08

And again, the idea that the Community Foundation holds onto is this, we are better when we work together. And we pulled those organizations together and thought, how can we be even more intentional, and even more strategic, the next time a disaster strikes? And so we hired a facilitator actually known for disaster philanthropy work and brought them into our community. And we talked with, you know, many people through community dialogues and conversations and surveying, and realize that creating a collective fund for people to give to in moments of disaster was what we needed to do as a community.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 10:51

So you know, we were really fortunate, we had great partners come around the table, from our emergency management office in Polk County, to our local American Red Cross chapter, our local United Way, the Community Foundation and others, and created this fund. And really what it does is, it activates in moments of disaster, and really is focused on reducing economic and health impacts on vulnerable populations. And then, of course, always helping our community keep its focus on the future as well. So yeah, it was activated in 2020 due to the pandemic. And, you know, we've had a lot of coordination, a lot of conversation. And I know it will be critical as we continue to move forward at this time, and in the years to come.

**Steve Adams, host** 11:42

I don't think any of us are going to forget 2020, that's for sure. And on top of that pandemic, of course, Angie, we had the derecho which is a weather term I was not familiar with. But the last three to five years, I picked up things like bomb cyclone, and polar vortex to my vocabulary. So the derecho certainly blew through Central Iowa particularly hard and did quite a bit of damage there, so are you helping out in that regard as well?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 12:11

Well, you know, when you think about the derecho—and I agree with you, some of those terms are quite new—but you know, when the derecho came through, you know, there was impact to families who are already reeling with the impacts of COVID. And so really, the investments that were made to help keep people in their homes, healthy and safe, you know, it was all kind of this storm, and lots of investment was doubled down to support those families who are already really struggling. But you know, this is something that, as all of the communities across Iowa, we continue to figure out how to move forward together. And we're really seeing folks step up and really lean in to embracing community and the most vulnerable right now, and I think that's really a blessing for our communities.

**Steve Adams, host** 12:57

I also noticed that, looking over the website, talk about an exhaustive list of COVID-19 resources, my gosh, especially for those nonprofits. Could you highlight maybe just a few of those and which ones seem to be kind of the most popular in your opinion?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 13:14

Well, other than directing people to reach out to Paul, when they might need it? Yes, you know, we see one of the things that the Community Foundation can best do is just introduce people to resources. You know, nonprofit organizations come in all shapes, all sizes, all focus areas, and levels of challenge and great opportunity. And so what we realized is, we had an opportunity ourselves, to introduce them to resources that were available, whether they might be ideas on disaster recovery planning, or their own disaster plans, to you know, access to additional resources related to drawing down some federal opportunities. And we captured it all there and boy, is it a fluid webpage. And we're getting feedback all the time about additional needs that might exist.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 14:07

And then a couple of things that I might draw attention to that, you know, the Community Foundation, again, in partnership with so many, were able to activate two specific things that I know have been consistently commented on as helpful to the sector here locally. The first one is the need to create and have community among nonprofit leaders. Many nonprofit organizations, as you can only imagine, are stretched, are stressed and continue to do the hard work every single day. And sometimes that can be isolating, as well as massively intense.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 14:50

But what we know is they're great people who lead those organizations, and they wanted an opportunity to talk with each other. So we created something called community circles that have been meeting since April, nearly every week, and we're bringing in presenters to talk and share with them ideas, whether it's your concept about financial forecasting, to know how much you, how might you consider a strategic collaboration, and also giving them time to just be with one another and support each other with their challenges and also help them identify opportunities. So that was a really powerful resource that we brought that might seem simple, but we know continues to be so important.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 15:31

And then the other piece that I would just outline, you know, with some of these federal programs and resources that were made available through the CARES Act and other things, you know, we realized that for a lot of nonprofits, they simply wanted some outside, maybe counsel might be a good way to phrase that, to just help them think about what made sense for them to pursue. So we were able as a community to create what was called the nonprofit ask-line. And we hired an individual attorney who had conversations with nonprofit leaders to help them think about questions they should ask or discussions they could have with their board about different funding options that are made available, especially in the early stages of a pandemic. So again, a couple of ways that we tried to try to continue to try to be nimble in serving nonprofits in our community. And that's really why community foundations are here, to help provide services when they are needed.

**Steve Adams, host** 16:35

Well, we do have another mystery guest—the quiet man, as we'll call him on this podcast—but Paul Thelen is also with us today. And as I mentioned in the introduction, Paul's the director of the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, located at the University of Iowa. Paul, we gave Angie a shot, I'm going to turn this to give you the same opportunity. Tell us a little bit about the Nonprofit Resource Center and what you do and what the center does.

**Paul Thelen** 17:04

Certainly, thank you, Steve. And if it counts for anything, I was nodding my head vigorously during your conversation with Angie.

**Steve Adams, host** 17:11

I heard it all the way through, Paul. [laughter]

**Paul Thelen 17:14**

The center, yes. It's now in its 20th year. We were founded by professor of law and president emeritus Sandy Boyd, really as a statewide resource for Iowa's nonprofit sector. Our mission is to strengthen the organizations who help our communities in a variety of ways. They help make our communities healthier, smarter, cleaner, livelier, faith-filled and prosperous. And the way we accomplish our work really is through three different ways. One is education at the university level. Second is engagement with organizations across the state. And third is in research.

**Paul Thelen 17:48**

And I must stress, you know, Steve, we could not do what we do at the center without strong collaborations with foundations, charities, libraries, professional associations, and beyond, including Angie and the amazing folks at the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. Together, what we're able to do is produce a variety of learning and networking opportunities, through workshops and conferences, as well as one-on-one services such as strategic planning, capacity-building, and board development.

**Steve Adams, host 18:15**

Terrific, and you and Angie, I know have a mutual admiration society thing going on here, so I'm not gonna step on any of that. [laughter] So Paul, kind of an overview of the Iowa nonprofit sector and really kind of get into the depth and the scope of nonprofits in Iowa.

**Paul Thelen 18:35**

Absolutely, Steve, and I have to say the mutual admiration is even better because it's true. And that's just, it's what's great about, I think, the sector in Iowa. But to give you more of kind of an overview, nonprofits exist in every county in our state, and they're involved in, as Angie described, lots of different areas. They're in education, they're in health care, they're in social services, arts and recreation. They include religious organizations and civic organizations. If you were to look at IRS data—the IRS puts out a master file, and so in July of 2020, we took a look at that file. And if you break it down, there's approximately 23,000 or so 501(c) nonprofit organizations, and most of those who are reporting, about 76% of those, have annual revenue under 50,000 per year.

**Paul Thelen 19:23**

And then on the other end of the spectrum, you have about 1.3% of those organizations that have revenue over \$10 million per year. But the mistake that no one should make is confusing revenue with community impact. So we know that small organizations, oftentimes consisting mainly of volunteers, those are vital to our communities. That said, approximately 11 and a half percent, about 143,000 private employees in Iowa are employed in the nonprofit sector, making it the third largest in the state behind retail trade and accommodation and food service, and ahead of manufacturing.

**Steve Adams, host 20:00**

I had absolutely no idea on that. That's just astounding. So when it comes to, and you alluded to revenue, and but also with employment, what would you say, Paul, are some of the greatest challenges facing nonprofits today? And are there resources for that, at either the local, state or even federal level?

**Paul Thelen 20:22**

Sure. I've spoken with nonprofit leaders from across the state, and what's clear to me is that the pandemic has hit organizations asymmetrically. So what I mean by that is, that for some, demand for their services remains incredibly high. For others, such as performing arts organizations, it's meant a reduction in programming. So, you know, for organizations that have relied on earned-income activities

that have had to be cancelled, postponed or significantly altered, those organizations are feeling those losses.

**Paul Thelen 20:54**

Many organizations, you know, as they made adjustments to the pandemic have made, you know, had to make significant investments. So there's cost there in terms of how they deliver their mission-related services. There were two surveys that were put out, one in March and one in May in Iowa, by the Iowa Economic Development Authority and UNI, and that survey asked questions about revenue and employment. At the time, the revenue impact was seen between, you know, 35 and 40% reduction in revenue for nonprofit organizations. Employment impact was between, you know, 15 and 25%.

**Paul Thelen 21:27**

There was a study that was also done in the summertime that examined the Paycheck Protection Program and other loans that were available both nationally and by state. And while the national average for eligible nonprofits receiving loans was about 40% or so, Iowa fared a bit better than that: around 51% of eligible nonprofits received loans, in part because of the great communication that happened across the network, including at the community foundation level. So what we think the result of that was, was about 78% of nonprofit jobs being retained. But you have to remember that was in the summer—you know, we're now in the fall. So, circumstances continue to be fluid continued to change.

**Paul Thelen 22:03**

And so, you know, there are numerous resources, as you asked, there are numerous at the local, state and federal levels. I encourage people to visit their local community foundations like the one in Des Moines—we have others across the state in Cedar Rapids and Waterloo and Dubuque and elsewhere—to look at those local resources, especially. Also [iowa.gov](http://iowa.gov), you can go and find opportunities for resources there from the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Iowa Workforce Development and others, you can find resources. We also have a link on our page at the Center to get connected to some of those resources, both local, state, as well as at the federal level.

**Steve Adams, host 22:42**

Well, having been working with nonprofits myself throughout my entire professional career, one of the things that I've always said is, volunteers are kind of driving the nonprofit bus. And I gotta wonder, Paul, what would you say are the impact or impacts that volunteers have in the success of a nonprofit? And how would you characterize maybe Iowa's volunteers, and how do we compare to the rest of the nation, for example?

**Paul Thelen 23:11**

Well, Steve, first of all, thank you for your service. We couldn't do any of this without volunteers. And I'm happy to say that Iowa is absolutely a volunteer state—we rank fourth in the nation in volunteering, about 41% or so of us volunteer, about 1 million volunteers in Iowa, contributing about 56 million volunteer hours, which, you know, when you do the math works out to be \$1.3 billion in value. So we absolutely do rely on volunteers. But the issue that we're having during this time is that nonprofits want to make certain that their volunteers are safe. And so organizations, they've had to make adjustments through both, you know, safer in-person practices, perhaps increased virtual participation.

**Paul Thelen 23:54**

But even those changes, we know, have not been enough in terms of organizations, you know, losing volunteer hours. And we know this is especially true with, you know, kind of that older and retirement-age set of volunteers, as well as those that came from, you know, younger in-person volunteers from local colleges and universities. And those have, you know, gone through changes. So, we are a

volunteer state, we couldn't do any of this without volunteers. But we know there's been an impact. And you can go to, there's another great resource, Volunteer Iowa, if you want to use that resource to connect with more ways to volunteers in your community safely.

**Steve Adams, host** 24:29

Well, as we have heard frequently on these podcasts, the term pivot or change, or you know, the business model has to be recast, or however you want to, you know, form the phrase, so to speak. People have had to make obvious changes to the way they go about business. So I gotta imagine that the staff and boards have had to change their strategies as a result of the pandemic. How would you say that has been most significant?

**Paul Thelen** 25:00

Yeah, absolutely. And here is probably where we must recognize the many outstanding nonprofit leaders we do have in Iowa, both at the state and the board levels. The nature of the nonprofit sector itself really does require leaders to navigate complex issues. I think Angie would probably readily agree with that. So while there's no doubt that plans have had to change in response to these, you know, changing circumstances every day, every day I get to, you know, meet with and talk with leaders who are adapting and adopting new strategies to keep delivering, you know, on their mission.

**Paul Thelen** 25:37

There's this really great quote by Dwight Eisenhower, who said, plans are worthless, planning is everything. And to me, that means that, you know, your organization, you know, hopefully has created a culture of being informed, you know, strategic decision-making, that when there are changes internally or externally, the organization can navigate those issues. And so that's what I'm seeing in the sector. I see it every single day, you know, very smart, you know, very thoughtful, you know, people in Iowa, who are making very tough decisions, and doing so to best benefit their communities.

**Steve Adams, host** 26:12

Well, so going forward, Paul, what's it gonna take to keep nonprofits sustainable and viable? And are there any trade secrets or best practices that our listeners might need to know?

**Paul Thelen** 26:25

Well, I think Iowa's nonprofit sector is resilient. And I continue to expect Iowans to be generous with their time, with their talent, and with their treasure. And if there is one secret, and I really hope it's not a well-kept secret at this point, but I would continue to encourage nonprofit leaders to continue to ask for help where and when they need it. It's been my experience, you know, from staff, from boards, from volunteers, donors, nearly everyone I engage with, that people want to be a source of strength at this time. And further, you know, we are really in a place now where the entire public has to be a willing partner to help reduce the strain on many of the organizations providing services during this pandemic.

**Steve Adams, host** 27:14

So Angie, same question back to you. What are your thoughts, best practices, trade secrets, anything out there you'd like to share?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 27:21

I love, you know, how Paul referenced it. And I would say you know a trade secret or a best practice, which I actually would say, you know, promising practices out there, perhaps even more so—this idea of the spirit of collaboration. I think, you know, collaboration can have the sense that it's just a buzzword. But when you peel back what the true essence of its meaning is all about, it really is about connectedness, you know, and how we can work together to solve these big issues. And the more that

we're seeing the spirit of collaboration, just, you know, rise up in our communities, it nearly gives you goosebumps, because from that comes innovation.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 28:10**

From that comes, you know, stronger engagement, from that comes just a greater sense of possibility for community. And I think that is what's helping the nonprofit sector communicate with donors, communicate with community leaders, communicate with legislative officials and policymakers. And the more we know about each other, and the more that we work together, helps the entire sector best serve our community. The other thing that I would just continue to urge nonprofit organizations to do is help, both as staff and as board members, help communicate and share and drive deeper understanding with donors about the importance of general operating support.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 29:07**

You know, I think, when I think about nonprofit organizations and the role that donors can play right now, it's really about, you know, opportunities to trust the people on the ground that know how to pivot, that know how to innovate, and that are doing the work that we know needs to be done. And as much as we can, encourage those donations to those organizations to just help them do the work, period. I think that that's really going to be important to sustain our sector right now.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 29:45**

Just as an illustration for you, because clearly you've gotten I love illustrations by this point, Steve, I once had somebody explain to me, you know, if you were going to a restaurant, and you had an amazing experience, and there was lovely music and there were these beautiful white linens on the table, and the host greeted you in such a warm and welcoming way, and the flower arrangements were lovely, and the meal was delicious. And you know, you left on your way just feeling such a sense of a wonderful evening—you wouldn't as a visitor to that place say, here's the payment on my bill, make sure that only the sous chef receives the payment. And I think you know, it's really quite interesting if you extrapolate that out to the nonprofit sector. You know, how much can we do to talk about all that it takes for organizations to do their work? So I guess that would be a challenge to nonprofits, to help communicate why the full picture of supporting organizations is so important.

**Steve Adams, host 30:46**

So Angie, do you have the address for that restaurant?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 30:49**

I know, right? [laughter] Probably in Paul's neighborhood, I don't know.

**Steve Adams, host 30:54**

There you go. There you go. Well, I—go ahead, Paul.

**Paul Thelen 30:58**

I was going to say, I couldn't echo more loudly. And I think Angie and I might have been the minority voice on this, but I hope in Iowa that that is changing, is that people within our organizations are our greatest resource. And so echoing everything that Angie said, being very cognizant of that, is something that will continue to make these organizations which are already doing such tremendous work, even better going forward. And so making certain you value those people is something that we find to be a focal point going forward, as well.

**Steve Adams, host 31:33**

Curiosity is killing me here. In regards to call volumes or direct inquiries for assistance, would you say it's gone up, down, or about the same? Angie, you first this time.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 31:46**

Well, in terms of organizations are reaching out to the Community Foundation, Paul talked about how there are various organizations at various stages, in particular right now to due to the pandemic. So we're seeing calls across the board, we're seeing people reach out, and what they're asking for varies, right—certainly, there's a need for funding and support. And, you know, the examples that Paul referenced in particular about performing arts venues. I mean, these are organizations that work so diligently at having a very robust revenue stream, both from earned revenue for productions, from program and education events, from grants from sponsorships, and this pandemic has impacted, you know, all of those revenue streams.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 32:36**

So funding is a very real need, not just for those types of organizations, but for those that are doing the really critical direct human service work as well. But we're also seeing inquiries and requests for assistance for some of those things that are a little less tangible, the connections that, will you brainstorm with me for a little bit, will you help make an introduction to this organization, there might be a way that we can share expenses. You know, I continue to be motivated and humbled by the humility and the innovation within the nonprofit sector.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin 33:17**

One example for you, we had an organization reach out, and they were seeing an increase of need for staffing to manage a grant program that they have the honor and opportunity to facilitate for individuals in our community. And they were struggling to find the right staffing to get that done and turn it around in a matter of days. But you know, the power of conversation, of trusting relationships, we were able to help connect another organization that had staff with similar expertise quickly. So they created a partnership to support each other in making sure that some grant funds and a grant program was executed, really, without missing a step—most importantly, for the people who needed support. So those are some of the types of increase that we're hearing, Steve—certainly funding, but it's so much more than that, that we can help offer to the communities.

**Steve Adams, host 34:15**

Paul, what about you? Inquiries and call volumes up, down, or about the same?

**Paul Thelen 34:22**

Yes, Steve, absolutely it's up across the board. And I'll say now, as I say in my email, I thank the patience of those who do reach out to us as we try to be responsive. You know, one of the things that Angie mentioned was just the fact that there are, you know, there's a whole community here, both, you know, in Des Moines and across the state of Iowa, and they're all approaching, you know, the different challenges here with different resources. And so what we've found is a lot of generosity by the professionals who serve the sector, you know, accountants and lawyers and fundraisers, as well as, you know, other associations, who are willing to, you know, offer guidance, offer services as they are able. And so while the demand is up, we're also seeing the supply, at the same time, the supply of those who are willing to offer so much in this time of need. And that's something that I find just incredibly encouraging.

**Steve Adams, host 35:19**

Well, I would agree. And, Angie, I gotta tell you, I've got a lot of friends in the performing arts, they were the first ones to shut down, and they're anticipating that they'll be the last ones to reopen. And, as an example, our local performing arts and education association here typically would do 50 road shows a year plus mainstage productions, and they'll be lucky to do to do 15 road shows this year and no onstage time. So I know that industry has been hit particularly hard.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 35:52

Mm-hm.

**Steve Adams, host** 35:54

Well, so you kind of touched on this a little bit earlier, but did you have a lot of folks that you would consider to be constituents, affiliates or otherwise, that did take advantage of the PPP or HEROES Act program? And are you anticipating there'll be more stimulus money coming their way? And I know, that's kind of asking the crystal ball, but Paul, what do you think?

**Paul Thelen** 36:19

So yes, you know, as part of the of the CARES Act, we saw both the Paycheck Protection Program being utilized, as well as Economic Injury Disaster Loans being utilized. You know, now in front of, you know, your members of Congress, you have both the HEROES Act 1.0, and HEROES Act 2.0, which was about continuing some of these, you know, some of these support mechanisms going forward. And that is still in Congress. And so I encourage those listening here to reach out to your elected officials to let them know the importance of this legislation for your communities, their organizations, like the ones that we're a part of.

**Paul Thelen** 36:56

So we're part of the National Council of Nonprofits, and they're leading advocacy efforts in this area. And so I just encourage folks that, you are the ones that your elected leaders need to hear from. Oftentimes nonprofit organizations, they're on the front lines, they're the ones who are, you know, delivering the crucial services that are needed. And so, by all means, I know that your senators and Congress members need and want to hear from you in order for them to make good decisions.

**Steve Adams, host** 37:26

Angie, what about you?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 37:28

Yeah, I would agree, you know, with Paul. We did see organizations locally access those resources. And we know that need is going to continue across the board, and certainly hopeful for additional support to the sector. You know, at the same time, we're working as the Committee Foundation of Greater Des Moines with other partners across the state and locally, to make sure that our communities and leaders really understand the role that nonprofits play. And, you know, I think helping them understand the role that nonprofits play, not just in response, but to truly this overall recovery, including the economic recovery of our community is so critical.

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 38:12

I think, you know, it could be easy for someone to see the nonprofit sector as an added element to community. But it's critical that that the nonprofit sector is seen as an essential element to community, both in times of disaster, but also in times of great progress and great success. So I think we're going to continue to help connect organizations to those resources that exist. We're going to continue to help donors learn about organizations that might be of interest to them, or learn more about the organizations they're already passionate about, and continue to make sure that people understand the role that nonprofits play in truly making Iowa a great place to live, work and retire.

**Steve Adams, host** 39:05

Well, I know Senator Grassley over the years has had a keen interest in nonprofits, so he might be a good starting point to reach out. I gotta tell you both, super, super information today. And I know our listeners, and especially those that are either a volunteer or employee of a nonprofit, will find a lot of

value here. And again, thanks for your valuable time. So Angie, if somebody wanted to get a hold of you and just talk shop, or maybe you know, as you put it earlier, do a little brainstorming, how would they get ahold of you?

**Angie Dethlefs-Trettin** 39:37

Well, absolutely, I always welcome that opportunity. You can call our office, 515-883-2626. And you can also check out that website that you referenced Steve, with all those resources and have the staff listing to contact us via email. So you can find us on the web at [DesMoinesFoundation.org](http://DesMoinesFoundation.org).

**Steve Adams, host** 40:01

Very good. And Paul, same question, how do we get a hold of you, buddy?

**Paul Thelen** 40:06

Absolutely, the same ways would work great—you can visit our website, where we have contact information. Our website is [INRC.law.uiowa.edu](http://INRC.law.uiowa.edu). Our phone number is 319-335-9765, and we're happy to connect.

**Steve Adams, host** 40:25

You did however mention, Paul, the call volumes and inquiries are up, and it may take some time before you're able to get back to everybody, right?

**Paul Thelen** 40:33

It does. And some questions are more complicated than others, as you can imagine. We do have resource pages to answer hopefully questions that we see a lot of. And oftentimes, you know, like I always say to my staff members, who I value greatly during this time, as I always have, we never say no. I mean, our goal is to always take in inquiries, and if we can, you know, provide a response. We try to connect people to those who might be best positioned to, so that might include, you know, the community foundation in their town or others. And so we're always happy to provide that service.

**Steve Adams, host** 41:08

Thanks again, you two—what a wonderful podcast. Well, folks, on a programming note, please listen in over the next two weeks as we're going to start a series of podcasts directly related to childcare and its impact on working Iowa family, so stay tuned for that. If you have any questions about this Back to Business Iowa podcast, please feel free to contact me, Steve Adams, at [stadams@iastate.edu](mailto:stadams@iastate.edu). And again, as always, thanks for listening.

**Steve Adams, host** 41:41

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